

Message Text

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53
ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 MC-02 TRSE-00 /041 W
----- 006792

R 210900Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3089
OSD//ISA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
CINCPAC

S E C R E T NOFORN DISSEM SINGAPORE 3137

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

WARNING NOTICE: SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS
INVOLVED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS/ PFOR, MASS, SN
SUBJECT: CAPTURED U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT (U)

REF: STATE 168548

1. (S"NFD/WSSMI) ON 18 JULY 75 A SENIOR SINGAPORE MINISTRY
OF DEFENCE OFFICIAL INFORMED DATT SINGAPORE THAT A HOLDING COM-
PANY WHICH CONTROLS ALL GOS/MINDEF OWNED MILITARY EQUIPMENT
PRODUCING/SELLING FIRMS WAS CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF ATTEM-
TING PURCHASE OF U.S. EQUIPMENT CAPTURED IN VIETNAM. OFFICIAL
STRESSED THAT HIS QUERY WAS PRELIMINARY AND "UNOFFICIAL"
IN NATURE AND REQUESTED ANSWERS TO THREE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

A. WHAT WOULD BE USG ATTITUDE TOWARDS SINGAPORE EMBARKING ON
SUCH PROJECT?

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B. WHAT RESIDUAL RIGHT OF OWNERSHIP WOULD USG CLAIM TO CAPTURED
U.S. EQUIPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE PURCHASED?

C. TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD USG CONTROLS BE PLACED OVER ANY ITEMS

OF CAPTURED EQUIPMENT PURCHASED? (COMMENT: EMBASSY/DAO BELIEVE HE MAY BE REFERRING TO POSSIBLE RESALE TO THIRD COUNTRY).

2. (S/NFD/WSSML) DATT BELIEVES THAT MINDEF OFFICIAL'S QUESTIONS WERE EXTREMELY TENTATIVE AND DESIGNED TO SOUND OUT U.S. ATTITUDE. OFFICIAL HAS, HOWEVER, WORLDWIDE CONNECTIONS WITH ARMS DEALERS AND IS IN POSITION TO LEARN OF WEAPON AVAILABILITY. ADDITIONALLY, GOS WAS PROVIDED ON 9 JUL 75 WITH DIA DOCUMENT "FUTURE VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST USE OF CAPTURED EQUIPMENT" WHICH INCLUDES LISTINGS OF EQUIPMENT LEFT IN VIETNAM.

3. (S/NFD/WSSMI) SINCE RELEASE OF DOCUMENT TO GOS, USDAO HAS NOTED AN INCREASE IN ALREADY HIGH CONCERN EXPRESSED THAT CAPTURED U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT MIGHT BE SOLD OR PROVIDED TO INSURGENT FORCES IN THE AREA. OUTBIDDING INSURGENTS (PREEMPTIVE PURCHASE) AS A MEANS TO COUNTER THIS POSSIBILITY WAS MENTIONED ON ONE OCCASION BY SINGAPORE'S DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, BUT WAS DISCOUNTED BY DAO OFFICERS AS A VIABLE SOLUTION.

4. (S/NFD/WSSMI) DAO BELIEVES THAT PROBABLY UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR PURCHASE FROM VIETNAM MAY BE ITEMS REQUIRED BY GOS ARMED FORCES, PRINCIPALLY IN THE CATEGORY OF INFANTRY WEAPONS ALREADY IN THE SINGAPORE INVENTORY. POSSIBILITY ALSO EXISTS THAT SOME WEAPONS WOULD BE OFFERED TO OTHER SEA CUSTOMERS, PRIMARILY THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES. IN THIS INSTANCE GOS MAY REALIZE IT IS PARTICULARLY WELL PLACED BOTH GEOGRAPHICALLY AND FINANCIALLY TO ENGAGE IN SUCH AN EFFORT, AND RESALE OF EQUIPMENT WOULD BE FOR SINGAPORE'S FINANCIAL BENEFIT AS WELL AS FOR POLITICAL/MILITARY COOPERATION WITH NEIGHBORS. GOS ARSENALS ARE OPERATED AS PRIVATE COMPANIES, WHOLLY OR PARTLY OWNED BY MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, ALLOWING GOS TO DEAL IN WEAPONS WITHOUT OVERT STIGMA OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT.

5. (S/NFD/WSSMI) EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT, DEPENDING UPON USG RESPONSE TO QUERIES PARA ONE A, B, AND C, GOS MAY BE PREVAILED UPON TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON VIETNAM ARMS DISPOSITION
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TO INCLUDE PARTIES INVOLVED, MODES OF TRAFFIC, ETC. WE RECOGNIZE USG RESPONSE TO THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE DIFFICULT SINCE GOS PURCHASE OF SUCH EQUIPMENT WOULD PRESUMABLY PROVIDE FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO DRV AND RGSVN.
GRANT

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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KUALA LUMPUR
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